

Biblically Foundational Friendships

Genuine, biblical friendships will transform your life and ignite your faith.

Would you like to experience that kind of connection?

Sometimes we feel disconnected and unseen by others; we lack true friendships. As a result, we also feel disconnected from our church family. In fact, some Sunday morning church attendees arrive alone, worship alone, and leave alone.

Is that you?

Or, maybe you're a new believer and you aren't sure how this whole "church thing" works, let alone biblical friendships. The question remains, do you see the importance of biblical friendships?

Perhaps you're thinking – I've got plenty of friends and they meet my needs and make me happy. Not a "bad" thing!

However, can we cultivate and nurture authentic, impactful relationships between sisters in the body of Christ?

As followers of Jesus, it is imperative that we focus on developing characteristics in our lives to build genuine, biblical friendships with other believers.

Real friends—meaning biblical friends—are not in the relationship for what they can get out of it nor do they abandon or betray friends in difficult times. Biblical friends stick with you even when there is no perceived benefit in doing so and even in the midst of adversity. Biblical friends are those whose hands, feet, and mouthpiece demonstrate Christ's love to us!

This is the message in **Proverbs 17:17**: *"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."*

The word "brother" in this verse refers not just to siblings, but more broadly to brothers and sisters in Christ.

This is why it's important to understand the biblical definition of friendship.

Honestly, without friends, particularly godly Christian friends, I would have floundered in my walk with Christ and in life itself.

Studying friendship from God's perspective can help us be better friends. It can also help us know what good, godly friendship is supposed to look like and by His grace - bring Him most glory!





I. Who Established Biblical Friendship?

Throughout Scripture we will see that God desires a relationship with His people and a deep friendship with us. All those who have a genuine saving faith in Jesus belongs to Christ's true church.

The Lord plants believers within a family of believers to grow and serve together, and He encourages sincere friendship to help us grow in our faith and bring Him the most honor!



It's amazing that God always wants our best and provides everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)!



- In **Genesis 2:7-23** – When God created Adam, He had intimate fellowship with him. God also served Adam by providing a companion, Eve, for him.
- In **James 2:23** – The phrase “Friend of God” is found: *“And the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”—and he was called a friend of God.”*
- In **Exodus 33:11a** – *“The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.”*
- In **Ecclesiastes 4:9-10** – These verses teach the importance of close relationships, saying, *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.”*
- In **1 John 4:7-12** – *“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.”*
- In **John 15:14-15** – *“You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”*

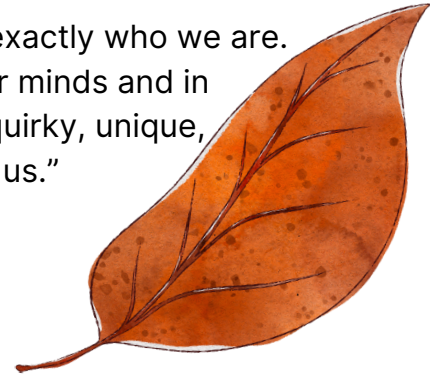


II. What Is the True Definition of Biblical Friendship?

● The World's definition of "Friendship":

"A relationship with someone who we feel connected to and who is there for us in some way. A connection with someone who has the same interests and accepts you unconditionally - someone you trust and whose company you enjoy."

"A deep friendship is one in which we feel seen and loved for exactly who we are. It's when we feel safe enough to talk about what's really on our minds and in our hearts — and when we trust that the things that make us quirky, unique, and different are the qualities our friend cherishes most about us."



● The biblical definition of a "Friend":

It is a strong word meaning "one who loves".

Proverbs 20:6 - "Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find?"

"_____ friendship is a relationship between people who are bound together by a common faith in Jesus Christ and work together to pursue Him and His kingdom with *intentionality* and *vulnerability*. *Companionship* is characterized by sacrificial love, respect, commitment, and truth, and it's an essential part of God's plan for us."

Rather than serving _____, biblical friendship serves primarily to bring _____ _____, who brought us into friendship with the Father. It is *indispensable* for a believer's growth, and an essential element of what God created us for.

Failing to recognize and benefit from the support, accountability, and unity of Christ's church means to miss out on life's deepest relationships and greatest blessings!



Friendship that is truly biblical must therefore begin with our friendship with Christ.

Augustine attests to this, praying: "There can be no true friendship unless those who cling to each other are welded together by You in that love which is spread throughout our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given to us."



III. What Are the Characteristics of a Biblical Friend?

- **Ephesians 3:16-17** – “I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, **being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people**, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”
- **Proverbs 18:24** – “One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”
- **Proverbs 12:26** – “The righteous choose their friends carefully, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.”
- **Romans 12:10** – “Be devoted to one another with mutual love, showing eagerness in honoring one another.”
- **Proverbs 27:17** – “As iron sharpens iron, so a person sharpens his friend.”
- **Hebrews 10:24-25** – “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
- **Proverbs 3:27** – “Do not withhold good from those who need it, when you have the ability to help.”



- **Proverbs 17:9** – *“The one who forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates close friends.”*
- **1 Thessalonians 5:11** – *“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, just as you are in fact doing.”*
- **1 Thessalonians 5:14-15** – *“And we urge you, brothers and sisters, admonish the undisciplined, comfort the discouraged, help the weak, be patient toward all. See that no one pays back evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good for one another and for all.”*
- **Ephesians 4:2-3** – *“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”*
- **Ephesians 4:15** – *“Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.”*
- **James 5:15-16** – *“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other... the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”*
- **Galatians 5:13-14,16** – *“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” So, I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”*



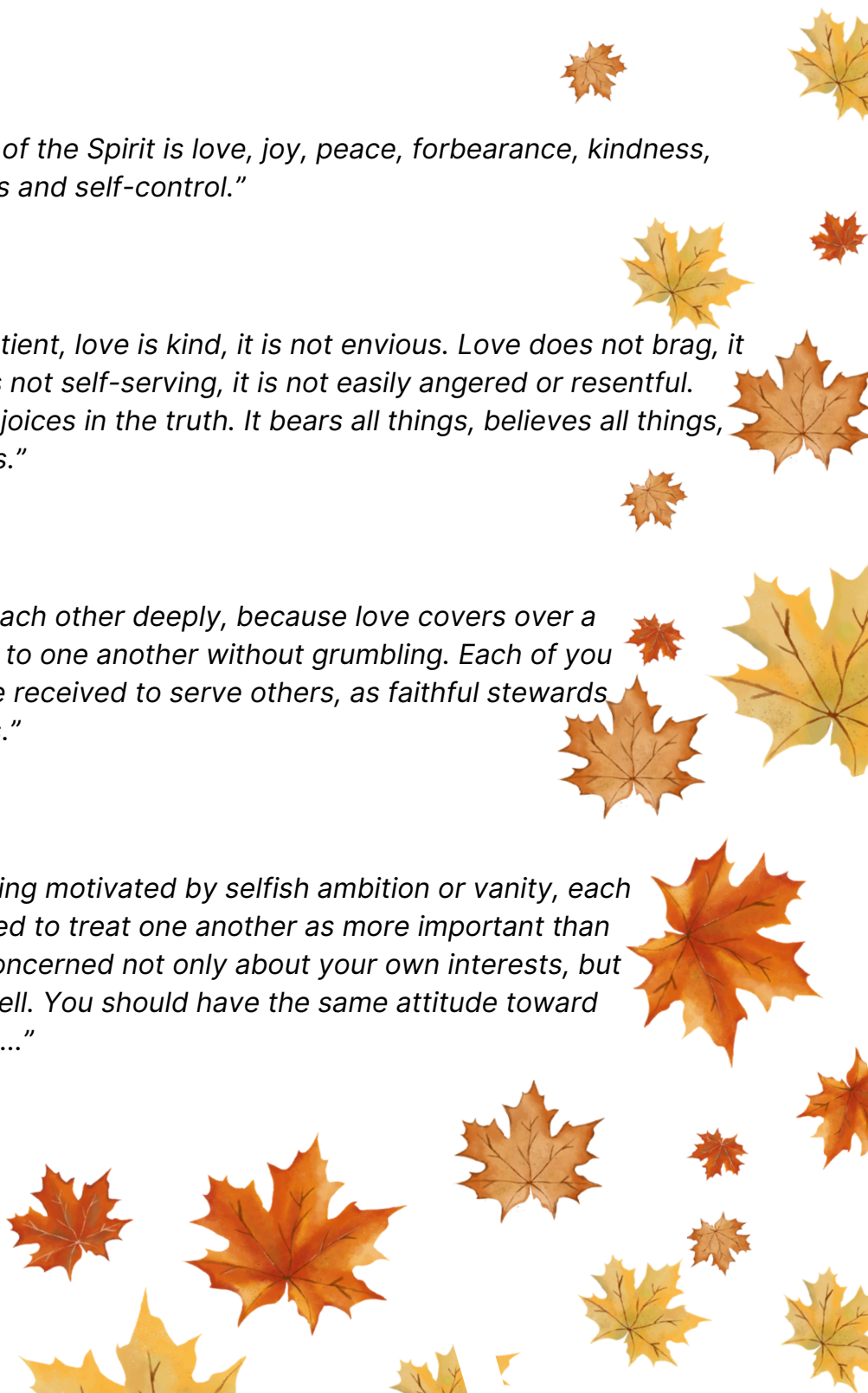
● **Colossians 3:12-17** – *“Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy & beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put-on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

● **Galatians 5:22-23** – *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”*

● **1 Corinthians 13:4-7** – *“Love is patient, love is kind, it is not envious. Love does not brag, it is not puffed up. It is not rude, it is not self-serving, it is not easily angered or resentful. It is not glad about injustice but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”*

● **1 Peter 4:8-10** – *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.”*

● **Philippians 2:3-5** – *“Instead of being motivated by selfish ambition or vanity, each of you should, in humility, be moved to treat one another as more important than yourself. Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but about the interests of others as well. You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had...”*





IV. Why Do We Need Biblical Friendships?

● **Because Jesus commands it - that we might _____!**

John 15:12-16 – *“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit- fruit that will last”*

Mark 12:31,33 – *“The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”*

● **Because we can _____ of Christ!**

Galatians 6:2 – *“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”*

Job 6:14 – *“Anyone who withholds kindness from a friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty.”*

● **Because Jesus asked us to follow His example and we receive _____!**

John 13:14-16 – *“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”*

● **Because God will _____ the love you have shown His people!**

Hebrews 6:10 – “For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love you have demonstrated for his name, in having served and continuing to serve the saints.”

● **Because a biblical friendship _____!**

Proverbs 27:9 – “*Perfume and incense make the heart rejoice, likewise the sweetness of one’s friend from sincere counsel*”

Proverbs 11:25 – “*A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*”

● **Because biblical friendships _____!**

Proverbs 13:20 – “*Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.*”



“To fight for Biblical truth without a love for God and others is to miss the truth entirely.”



V. What Are Some Biblical Examples of a Godly Friend?

Abraham and Lot: Abraham reminds us of loyalty and going above and beyond for friends. Abraham gathered hundreds of men to rescue Lot from captivity. **(Genesis 14:14-16)**



Ruth and Naomi: Friendships can be forged between different ages and from anywhere. In this case, Ruth became friends with her mother-in-law and they became family, looking out for one another throughout their lives. Ruth showed love and loyalty by leaving her home and people to follow Naomi and her God. God blessed them both. This is the line of Jesus! **(Ruth 1:16-17)**

David and Jonathan: Sometimes friendships form almost instantly. Have you ever met anyone that you just knew immediately was going to be a good friend? David and Jonathan were just like that. Jonathan is a perfect example of a biblical friend. Jonathan protected David from his father Saul although he had much to gain at David's demise. In response, David cared for Jonathan's children after he died bringing them into his royal household. **(1 Samuel 18-20, 2 Samuel 21)**

Elijah and Elisha: Friends stick it out with one another, and Elisha shows that by not letting Elijah go to Bethel alone. There was fear because they were killing the prophets at this time. **(2 Kings 2:2)**

Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: While friends look out for one another, like Daniel did when he requested that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego be promoted to high positions, sometimes God leads us to help our friends so they can help others. The three friends went on to show King Nebuchadnezzar that God is great and the only God. **(Daniel 2:49)**



Jesus with His disciples: Jesus specifically chose each one of His disciples and asked them to follow Him. He taught them, cared for them, protected them, demonstrated love for others, forgave their doubt, denials, pride, betrayals, and abandonment. Yet He served them by washing their feet just before He was to also die for them. No greater love has anyone shown! **(John 13)**

Jesus With Mary, Martha, and Lazarus: Jesus had a close friendship with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus to the point where they spoke plainly to him, and he resurrected Lazarus from the dead. True friends are able to speak their minds honestly to one another, whether right or wrong. Meanwhile, friends do what they can to tell each other the truth and help one another. **(Luke 10, John 11)**

Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus: Paul talks about the loyalty of friends and the willingness of those close to us to look out for one another. In this case, Timothy and Epaphroditus are the types of friends that take care of those close to them. **(Philippians 2:19–26)**

